



# Department of Justice

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Eastern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, December 15, 2008  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae)  
Docket #: 08-cr-225-FCD

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**STOCKTON WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO EMBEZZLING  
MORE THAN \$283,000 FROM SAN JOAQUIN CHILD CARE REFERRAL AGENCY**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced that MARY THONGDEE, 25, of Stockton, Calif., pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Frank C. Damrell Jr. to participating in the embezzlement of over \$283,000 from the Family Resource and Referral Center. The Center receives money from the San Joaquin County Human Services Agency to pay child care providers for services rendered to qualifying parents on public assistance.

This case is the result of an extensive investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner, who is prosecuting the case, THONGDEE admitted in her plea agreement that from November 2004 through July 2007 she assisted co-defendant LAPHONE VONGKEO, 32, who worked as a Payment Provider Analyst at the Family Resource and Referral Center, by receiving and cashing checks that VONGKEO fraudulently caused to be issued to THONGDEE. THONGDEE then cashed the checks and shared the proceeds with VONGKEO.

Sentencing is scheduled for February 23, 2009. THONGDEE faces a maximum penalty of up to 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

A jury trial with respect to co-defendant VONGKEO is scheduled for April 7, 2009.

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